

Message Text

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44

ACTION EUR-12

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USNATO 1149

AMEMBASSY ANKARA

AMEMBASSY ATHENS

AMEMBASSY BONN

AMEMBASSY RUSSELS

AMEMBASSY COPENHAGEN

AMEMBASSY THE HAGUE

AMEMBASSY HELSINKI

AMEMBASSY LISBON

AMEMBASSY LONDON

AMEMBASSY LUXEMBOURG

AMEMBASSY OSLO

AMEMBASSY OTTAWA

AMEMBASSY PARIS

AMEMBASSY ROME

AMEMBASSY STOCKHOLM

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SUBJECT: MORE ON EUGENE ROSTOW'S VISIT TO ICELAND

REF: REYKJAVIK 0749

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1. IN AN EDITORIAL IN PROGRESSIVE PARTY DAILY TIMINN JULY 4, THORARINN THORARINSSON, FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE CHAIRMAN, BLASTS ROSTOW'S ATA SPEECH AND ATTRIBUTES HIS MISINFORMATION ABOUT ICELAND TO WASHINGTON AND THE CIA. VERBATIM EDITORIAL IS QUOTED BELOW. EMBASSY COMMENT FOLLOWS SEPTTEL.

2. BEGIN QUOTE

RECENTLY EUGENE ROSTOW, FORMER UNDER-SECRETARY OF STATE TO THE US, WAS IN ICELAND. HE WAS IN OFFICE DURING PRESIDENT JOHNSON'S TERM AND WAS KNOWN AS ONE OF THE GREATEST HAWKS OF THE GOVERNMENT, AS THOSE WERE CALLED WHO SUPPORTED THE US'S CONTINUING PARTICIPATION IN THE VIET NAM WAR.

WE NEED NOT HAVE MENTIONED ROSTOW'S VISIT AT ALL IF MORGUNBLADID HAD NOT PUBLISHED AN INTERVIEW WITH HIM WHERE AMAZING IGNORANCE OF ICELANDIC AFFAIRS APPEARS. IT BECOMES EVIDENT IN THE VERY HEADLINE OF THE INTERVIEW WHICH GOES LIKE THIS: "SINCE ICELANDERS COULD DO IT, WE MUST BE ABLE TO DO IT - SAY DEMOCRATS IN PORTUGAL AND MALTA." IN THE INTERVIEW ROSTOW SAYD:

"COMMUNISTS ARE TRYING TO GAIN INFLUENCE EVERYWHERE AND DEMOCRACY CERTAINLY HAS TO BE ON GUARD. IT IS INTERESTING THAT YOU ICELANDERS HAVE SERVED AS ENCOURAGEMENT TO DEMOCRATIC FORCES IN COUNTRIES WHERE THERE IS CONSIDERABLE DANGER OF COMMUNISTS GAINING THE UPPER HAND. I BECAME AWARE OF THIS FOR EXAMPLE IN PORTUGAL AND MALTA RECENTLY. DEMOCRATS THERE SAY: "SINCE ICELANDERS COULD PREVENT THE COMMUNISTS FROM GAINING THE UPPER HAND, WE MUST ALSO BE ABLE TO DO IT." I AM CONVINCED THAT YOUR DETERMINED STAND IN THIS MATTER HAS BEEN OF TREMENDOUS IMPORTANCE."

THESE WORDS OF ROSTOW CAN ONLY BE INTERPRETED TO MEAN THAT DURING OLAFUR JOHANNESSON'S TERM THE COMMUNISTS WERE CLOSE TO GAINING POWER, AND THAT CONDITIONS HERE THEN WERE NOT UNLIKE THOSE IN PORTUGAL NOW.

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A CONSIDERABLE EFFORT WAS NEEDED IN ICELAND TO PREVENT THE COMMUNISTS FROM TAKING OVER. ALL ICELANDERS KNOW THAT THIS IS FAR FROM BEING TRUE. CONDITIONS HERE DURING THE TURN OF THE LEFTIST GOVERNMENT WERE AS DIFFERENT FROM CONDITIONS IN PORTUGAL AS CAN BE, AND THEREFORE IT IS STRANGE THAT THE FORMER UNDERSECRETARY OF STATE TO THE UNITED STATES SHOULD SAY SUCH A THING. HOWEVER, HE IS HARDLY TO BLAME---RATHER THOSE

WHO GAVE HIM THIS INFORMATION ABOUT ICELANDIC POLITICS. THEREFORE THE QUESTION ARISES: FROM WHERE DOES HE HAVE THIS INFORMATION? HOW DO HIGH GOVERNMENT OFFICIALS IN WASHINGTON GAIN THEIR KNOWLEDGE ABOUT ICELANDIC AFFAIRS? ALTHOUGH ROSTOW WAS NO LONGER IN GOVERNMENT WHEN THE LEFTIST GOVERNMENT WAS IN POWER HERE, IT IS QUITE LIKELY THAT HE HAD GOOD RELATIONS WITH SOME INFORMATION SERVICE IN WASHINGTON. THEREFORE WHAT HE SAID TURNS ONE'S ATTENTION IN THAT DIRECTION (TO WASHINGTON) AND TO BRING UP QUESTIONS ABOUT THE INFORMATION SERVICE ABOUT ICELANDIC MATTERS THAT GOES ON OVER THERE.

IT IS NOTHING NEW IF THE INFORMATION THAT THE CIA AND OTHER SIMILAR INSTITUTIONS GIVES TO AMERICAN POLITICIANS CONCERNING FOREIGN POLITICS ARE ABOUT AS TRUE AS THE AFOREMENTIONED WORDS OF ROSTOW BEAR WITNESS TO. THEREFORE MANY WRONG CONCLUSIONS HAVE BEEN DRAWN IN WASHINGTON AND THE CONSEQUENCES HAVE BEEN IN ACCORDANCE. THERE IS NO REASON TO CRITICIZE ROSTOW FOR THESE WORDS AS HE DOUBTLESS THOUGHT THAT HE WAS RIGHT. BUT IT IS CERTAIN THAT RELATIONS BETWEEN ICELAND AND THE UNITED STATES WILL NOT BE IMPROVED IF SUCH INFORMATION ACTIVITY ABOUT ICELAND IS CARRIED ON IN WASHINGTON. END QUOTE.

3. COMMUNIST-DOMINATED THJODVILJINN, JULY 5 QUOTES THE TIMINN EDITORIAL IN FULL, AND FEATURES THE CIA THEME, CLAIMING THAT THERE IS A CIA PRESENCE IN ICELAND WHICH IS TRANSMITTING FALSE AND MISCHIEVOUS INFORMATION TO WASHINGTON, INCLUDING THE "FALSE" INFORMATION THAT THE PEOPLES ALLIANCE IS "AN UNDEMOCRATIC PARTY." ARTICLE ALSO IMPLIES THAT THORARINSSON IN HIS CAPACITY AS CHAIRMAN OF FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE

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KNOWS AND "PRACTICALLY ADMITS" THE PRESENCE OF A CIA SPY NETWORK IN ICELAND. THE PAPER DEMANDS THAT THE FOREIGN RELATIONS COMMITTEE FORCE THE FOREIGN MINISTER TO INVESTIGATE AND REPORT TO THE PUBLIC ON "THE CIA PRESENCE IN ICELAND."
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